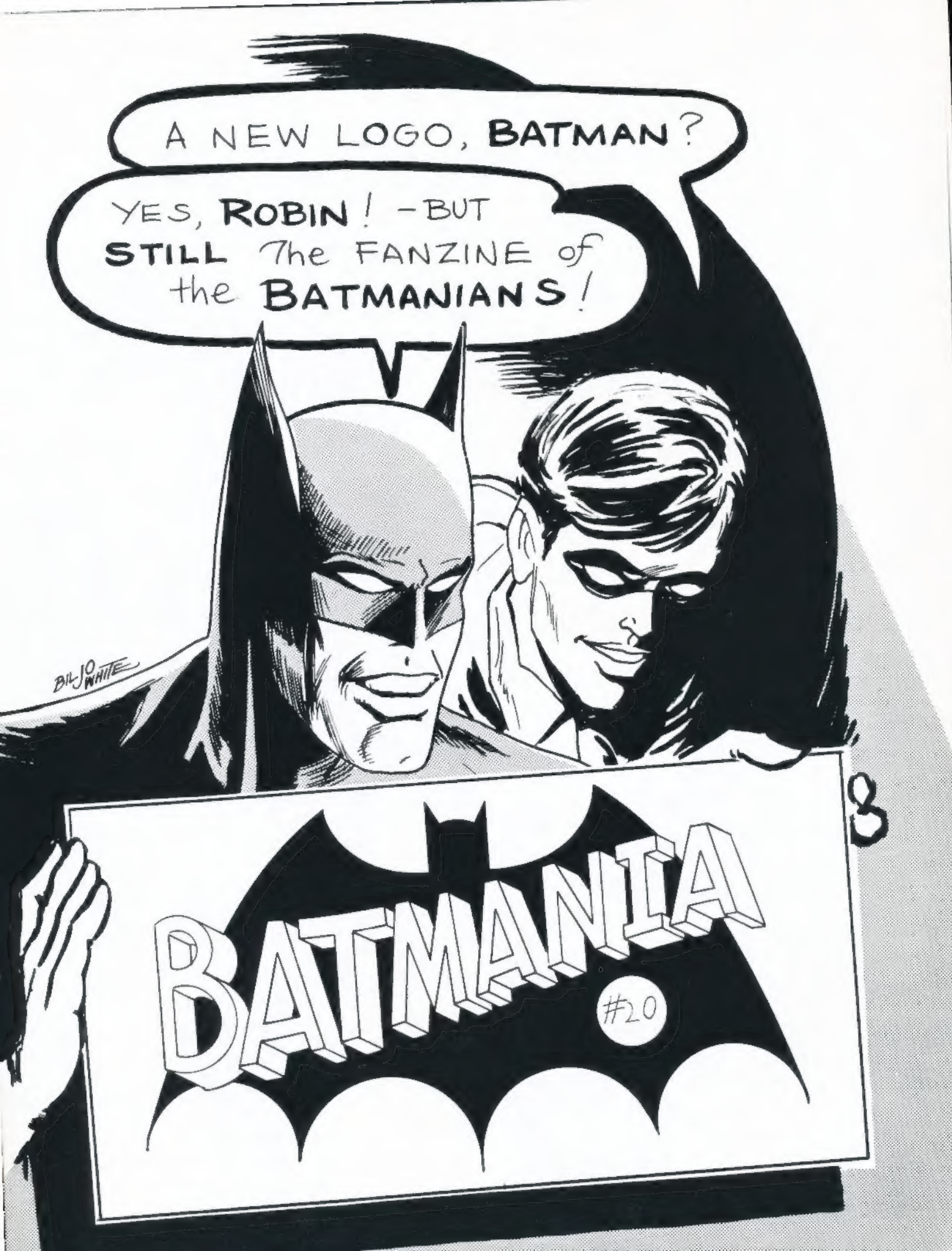
A NEW LOGO, BATMAN?
YES, ROBIN! - BUT STILL The FANZINE of the BATMANIANS!
BILJO WHITE
BATMANIA
#20

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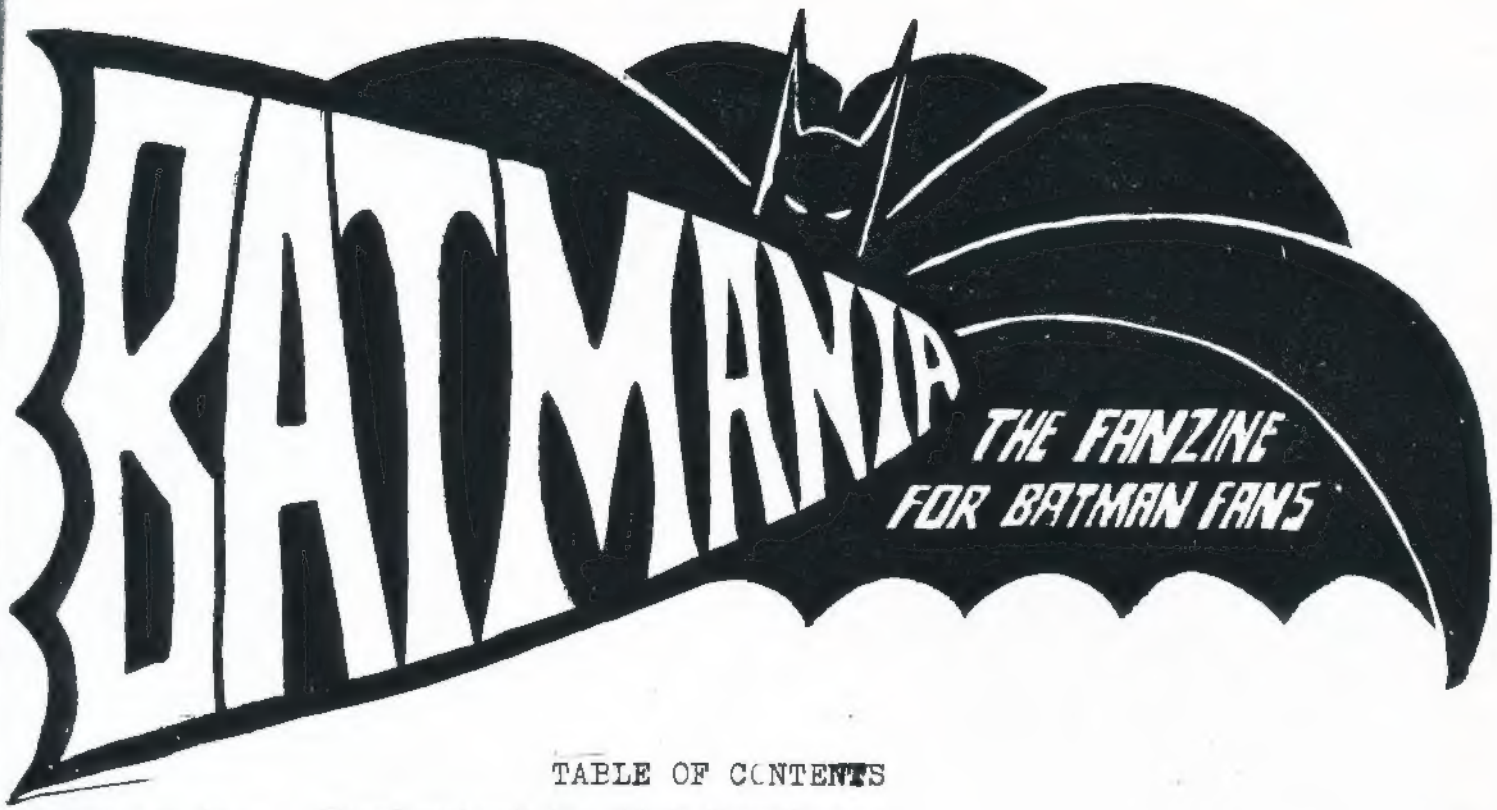

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Art Credits: Cover, Biljo White; cover logo, James Doyle; p. 3 (logo), Arlen L. Schumer; p. 5, Greg Chown; p. 7 (logo), Arlen Schumer; p. 12 (logo), Schumer; pp. 18-23, Mercy Van Vlack; p. 24, "Superswipe;" p. 25 (logo), Schumer; p. 26, Scott Taylor; p. 27, Taylor and Van Vlack; p. 28, Chown; p. 29, Taylor; back cover, Al Bradford (blown up to poster size, it served as backdrop for a Batman float at this year's Rutland Parade).

BATMANIA, The Fanzine For Batman Fans, is published irregularly (but we try to maintain a bimonthly schedule) by Richard H. Morrissey, 55 Claudette Circle, Framingham, Massachusetts 01701. Biljo White, Editor Emeritus. Richard Morrissey, Editor. Robert Mallory, Jr., Assistant Editor. Arlen L. Schumer, Art Director. Single copy, 50¢ including postage, or $2.00 for a four-issue subscription. Available in United Kingdom and Europe at 30p, or £1.20 for four issues, from Alan Austin, 180 (Basement) Lower Clapton Road, Clapton, London E5, England. Advertising rates (all pages photo-offset--ads must be the same size as they are to appear): Full page, $6.00, half page, $3.00, quarter page, $1.50, classified (retyped), 1¢ a word.
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Issue No. 20 December 1974

NIGHT of the... CHARLESTON?

by Rich Morrissey

On the afternoon of October 26, 1974, visitors to a Howard Johnson's restaurant in Fitchburg Junction, Mass. might have seen an individual with the lower half of his face completely covered with white paint, seated at the counter and engrossed in a Nero Wolfe mystery. But every so often I--I mean he would glance up, as if afraid the bus to Rutland, Vermont would arrive fifteen minutes early.

When Tom Fagan first contacted me about the revived BATMANIA, I instantly expressed an interest in the annual Halloween Parade in his home town. For the historically-minded who have not read his own account in BATMANIA #3, it was in 1960 that Tom first concieved the idea of the Batman as a trademark for Rutland's annual parade, and who himself acted as parade marshal until he mislaid his Batman costume in 1973. Other comic fans soon began to congregate at the parade, many dressed as other heroes from the comic books, until it developed into fandom's social event of the year--and stories set there have appeared in Batman, Avengers, JLA and other professional comics.

And yet, as a relative newcomer to fandom, I had never been to a Rutland Parade--until now. It had been scheduled for October 26th rather than for Halloween itself to make things simpler for participants--and the smaller children in the audience--but it made things more difficult for most of the Massachusetts fans I knew, many of whom worked on weekends. At length I found myself all alone, without even a ride up there--so I was forced to take a bus line that required a two-hour wait at the aforementioned HoJo, which is the only bus terminal Fitchburg Junction has.

But catch the bus I finally did--and after that I could relax and enjoy the ride through the mountains of New Hampshire and Vermont. After assuring myself that the bus station was "right across the street" from the Grant Shopping Plaza on the map Tom had sent me, I prevailed upon a grocery-store manager to let me use their rest room, and there put on my Spectre costume.

This costume, which my mother made at my direction, had once won second prize at a Boston Con. It consists of an expertly-flowing green cape, green gloves, trunks and boots, a mask (some other fans later claimed The Spectre doesn't wear a mask, but the shadows merely fall so the upper half of his face isn't visible. I still say he does--otherwise, how come his full face was visible in the Golden Age? Besides, I wouldn't want to paint my entire face) and a coat of white latex paint covering the exposed portions of my body. Then I stepped outside again and tried to find the others.

They found me at length--Superman and the Flash, both members of the Pittsburgh Comic Club, came along and decided that, as DC characters, we should be on the underrepresented Black Canary float, a decision confirmed by Tom's daughter Deena when we found her. We walked past an X-cellent X-Men float, a Wizard of Oz float, and several others, meeting a number of other comic fans in the process. Ken Gale, a New York fan who's been promising to put out a zine called Green Lantern's Light for over two years (but never has) recognized the costume I told him I'd be wearing. But he had no costume except a huge Green Lantern pin, so all he could do was watch.

After looking around at the Man-Thing float in front of us (there was someone on it Supes thought was Howard the Duck, but turned out to

be a Captain Klutz who'd been, so I'm told, at the New York Con) the four of us--including the Canary, who was Tom Fagan's niece--decided that since our float was one of the last, we could get off and watch the beginning of the parade. So we saw the first floats emerge from behind the shopping center, and then suddenly realized our float was moving! Wishing we had the speed of those we were portraying, we clambered on just in time, and commenced our journey through the streets of Rutland.

Our float, like the others, also carried a box of rolled-up comic books, which were donated free by the publishers (I think they were all Marvels- the Flash said "DC doesn't need to give its comics away!") and which we threw to the eager youngsters in the audience. "Hey, it's Superman!" "Throw me one, Superman!" "Hi, Superman!" came the shouts. One person even recognized the Flash, though someone else thought he was "Shazam." He had never seen the Captain Marvel show himself, and didn't intend to...

"Superman!" "Superman!" It was enough to give a fellow an inferiority complex, even though we were related on Jerry Siegel's side. By now the comics were all gone; we had not taken our own advice about saving some of them--and the audience began to grow restless. One kid who was old enough to know better actually began to climb on top of the float, until I turned over the empty cardboard box that had held the comics and dropped it on his head.

It was getting a trifle chilly (Tom had warned me about coming up wearing nothing but a skimpy costume and a coat of paint, but actually it was quite warm for that time of year) when we finally arrived back at Grant's. Black Canary's boyfriend (who was going to ride our float as--who else?--Green Arrow, but had decided he hadn't time to make a costume) gave the four of us a ride to the Old West Street Unitarian Universalist Church, where the party was to be held. (Tom no longer lives at the mansion on Nichols St., sad to say.)

On our way the Canary revealed some secrets about past years. In 1970--the year whose events had actually inspired the "Night of the Reaper"--the Reaper had indeed been there, and he and Al Weiss had indeed been atop the dam; but they had been holding a contest to see who could dance the Charleston the longest! Thus do legends die...

At the party, I rejoined Ken Gale for a bit, also managing to exchange some words with Irene Vartanoff. Others I met included the Black Widow (Melanie Crawford, a Marvel letterhack), Prince Valiant (Bob Polio, who some have

said is romantically interested in Irene, but he insists he just likes to talk to her), the Executioner and his wife, the Scarecrow (no, not Batman's foe--he was off the Wizard of Oz float) and others I have difficulty remembering. For, following the invitation, I had brought my own bottle--and by now had indulged a little too much.

After making a general nuisance of myself trying to find a room, the Hulk eventually offered Ken and me a place to sleep until the bus left at dawn. Saying good-bye to Tom at about 1 A.M. , after he had exacted a promise to return next year.from both of us, we made our way via Tom Hegeman's car to an apartment filled with textbooks and posters. A shower to remove the paint that by now was flaking all over the place, and I was sound asleep...

Three hours later Ken and I were up again, and headed for the bus station once more. The place was closed, so we had to wait till the 6:00 bus came, and then bought tickets for Boston--I'd decided to accompany him to Boston's Fourth Sunday Con. I was suffering from a terrible hangover--I don't drink that much that often--and tried to get some sleep on the bus, but didn't succeed. I don't think I could have gotten through the day if I hadn't gained an hour due to the time change.

At the Dealers's Market, we chatted a bit with Mike Valeric and Scot Sherman, watched some films (a Superman cartoon, a Three Stooges short, and abbreviations of "Beneath the Planet of the Apes" and "Jason and the Argonauts") and then I took the bus back to Framingham.

The entire journey had come to about $25--but I still remember the ecstatic look an a very small observer's face as I tossed him a comic book. That alone was worth the trip.

* * *

AREN'T WE ALL?

Batman, that creature of the night,
but aren't we all?

In our grey suits, never heard,
the unyielding dawn patrol,
we keep to ourselves.

But where are all your super-heroes
and paper bag players
when you need them?

The heroes are among the pages
and the villains in the streets.

And we run about the yard as creatures
of the night, in a perpetual
land of mist and foggy morgues.
In an eerie land of Batman.

—David Mazor

Detective COMICS INDEX

by Raymond L. Miller

•UPDATED & ILLUSTRATED BY ARLEN SCHUMER•

ORIGINALLY APPEARED IN THE *ROCKET'S BLAST-COMICOLLECTOR* #76-77

CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE

Last issue, the first part of this index chronicled the adventures of The Batman in DETECTIVE COMICS from his debut in issue #27 (May, 1939) to issue #262 (December, 1958). This issue of BATMANIA will conclude the index, continuing from the year 1959 to the present. These will be the stories from Jack Schiff's remaining years as editor, Julius Schwartz' revolutionary "New Look," the unfortunate television-inspired "camp" era, and finally, The Batman's "Big Change," which returned him full-circle to his original characterization as a "creature of the night."

1/59	#263	"The Secret of the Fantastic Weapons"	12 pages
	#264	"Peril at Playland Isle"	"
	#265	"Batman's First Case"	"
	#266	"The Satellite of Gotham City"	"
	#267	"Batman Meets Bat-mite"; first Bat-mite (UGH!)	"
	#268	"The Power That Doomed Batman"	"
	#269	"The Thousand Deaths of Batman"	"
	#270	"The Creature From Planet X"	"
	#271	"Batman's Armored Rival"	"
	#272	"The Crystal Creature"	"
	#273	"The Secret of the Dragon Society"	"
	#274	"The Hermit of Mystery Island"	"
1/60	#275	"The Zebra Batman"	"
	#276	"The Return of Bat-mite"	13
	#277	"The Jigsaw Menace From Space"	13
	#278	"The Man Who Became a Giant"	13
	#279	"The Creatures That Stalked Batman"	12
	#280	"The Menace of the Atomic Man"	13
	#281	"Batman, Robot"	"
	#282	"Batman's Interplanetary Rival"	"
	#283	"The Phantom of Gotham City"	"
	#284	"The Negative Batman"	"
	#285	"The Mystery of the Man-beast"	"
	#286	"The Doomed Batwoman"	"
1/61	#287	"The Raven and the Wasp"	"
	#288	"The Menace of the Multiple Creature"	"
	#289	"The Bat-mite Bandits"	"
	#290	"Robin's Robot"	12
	#291	"The Creature From the Bat-cave"	13

	#292	"The Colossus of Gotham City" (Cameo of Superman in last panel)	13
	#293	"Prisoners of the Dark World"	"
	#294	"The Villain of 100 Elements"	"
	#295	"The Secret of the Beast Painting"	"
	#296	"The Menace of the Plant-master"; time trip	"
	#297	"The Beast of Koba Bay"	"
	#298	"The Challenge of Clay-face"	"
1/62	#299	"Prey of the Alien Hunters"	"
	#300	"The Bizarre Polka-dot Man"	"
	#301	"The Condemned Batman"	"
	#302	"The Bronze Menace"	"
	#303	"Murder in Skyland"	"
	#304	"The Return of Clayface"	"
	#305	"Targets of the Alien Z-ray"	"
	#306	"The Wizard of 1,000 Menaces"	"
	#307	"Alpha, the Experimental Man"	"
	#308	"The Flame Master"	"
	#309	"The Mystery of the Mardi Gras Murders"	"
	#310	"Bat-mite's Super-circus"	"
1/63	#311	"Challenge of The Cat-man"	"
	#312	"The Secret of Clayface's Power"	"
	#313	"The Mystery of the $1,000,000 Treasure Hunt"	"
	#314	"Murder in Movieland"	"
	#315	"The Jungle Man of Gotham City"	"
	#316	"Double Batman Versus Double X"	"
	#317	"The Secrets of the Flying Bat-cave"	"
	#318	"The Cat-man Strikes Back"	15
	#319	"The Fantastic Dr. No-face"	13
	#320	"Batman and Robin-the Mummy Crimefighters"	"
	#321	"The Terrible Trio"	"
	#322	"The Bizarre Batman Genie"	"
1/64	#323	"The Zodiac Master"	"
	#324	"Menace of the Robot Brain"	"
	#325	"The Strange Lives of the Cat-man"	"
	#326	"Captives of the Alien Zoo"	"

Julius Schwartz took over the editorship of DETECTIVE COMICS (and BATMAN) with issue #327 and introduced the "New Look" Batman, in both art and story. On the whole, this move was intended to make The Batman more up to date and realistic. Stories were usually written by John Broome and Gardner Fox, while the artistic chores alternated between Carmine Infantino and Joe Giella, and (allegedly) Bob Kane and Giella. Due to the...ahem...Batman T.V. show (circa 1966-1968), this "New Look" gradually evolved into the "Camp Look," as both sales and puns increased.

#327	"Mystery of the Menacing Mask" (C.I. & J.G.)	15
#328	"Gotham Gang Line-up" (B.K. & J.G.) (Alfred's death ushers in good ol' Aunt Harriet)	15
#329	"Castle With Wall-to-Wall Danger"	15
#330	"The Fallen Idol of Gotham City"	15
#331	"The Museum of Mixed-up Men" (Book-length story with The Elongated Man)	24
#332	"The Joker's Last Laugh"	15
#333	"Hunters of the Elepahnts' Graveyard"	15

	#334	"The Man Who Stole From Batman" (First in the OUTSIDER series)	15
1/65	#335	"Trail of the Talking Mask"	"
	#336	"Batman's Bewitched Nightmare" (2nd in the Outsider series, with Zatanna)	"
	#337	"Deep-freeze Menace"	"
	#338	"Batman's Super-powered Punch"	"
	#339	"Batman Battles the Living Beast-bomb"	16
	#340	"The Outsider Strikes Again"	15
	#341	"The Joker's Comedy Capers"	16
	#342	"The Midnight Raid of the Robin Gang"	14
	#343	"The Secret War of the Phantom General" (Book-lengther with The Elongated Man)	24
	#344	"The Crime Boss Who Was Always One Step Ahead of Batman" (whew!)	14
	#345	"The Blockbuster Invasion of Gotham City"	"
	#346	"Batman's Inescapable Doom-trap"	"
1/66	#347	"The Strange Death of Batman" (A Gardner Fox "What-if?" story)	"
	#348	"Birdmaster of Bedlam" (Joe Kubert cover)	"
	#349	"The Blockbuster Breaks Loose" (Kubert cover)	"
	#350	"The Monarch of Menace" (last Kubert cover)	"
	#351	"The Cluemaster's Topsy-Turvey Crimes" (Sid Greene inks Infantino's pencils)	"
	#352	"Batman's Crime Hunt A-go-go"	"
	#353	"The Weather Wizard's Triple-treasure Thefts"	15
	#354	"No Exit for Batman"; with Dr. Tzin-Tzin	14
	#355	"Hate of the Hooded Hangman"	15
	#356	"Inside Story of the Outsider" (End of the series)	16
	#357	"Bruce Wayne Unmasks Batman" (Giella inks Infantino for the last time)	14
	#358	"Circle of Terror"	15
1/67	#359	"The Million Dollar Debut of Batgirl" (Greene inks Infantino from now on)	16
	#360	"The Case of the Abbreviated Batman"	14
	#361	"The Dynamic Duo's Double Deathtrap"	14
	#362	"The Night Batman Destroyed Gotham City" (With The Riddler)	14
	#363	"The True-false Face of Batman"; with Batgirl	15
	#364	"The Curious Case of the Crime-less Clues"	14
	#365	"The House That Joker Built" (B.K. & J.G.)	"
	#366	"The Round-Robin Death Threats" (Part One) (Critically acclaimed)	"
	#367	"Where There's a Will--There's a Slay" (Part Two)	"
	#368	"The 7 Wonder Crimes of Gotham City"	"
	#369	"Batgirl Breaks up the Dynamic Duo" (Infantino's last issue as penciller)	"
	#370	"The Nemesis From Batman's Boyhood"	"
1/68	#371	"Batgirl's Costume Cut-ups" (GIL Kane and Greene)	16
	#372	"The Fearsome Foot-fighters" (Neal Adams cover)	14
	#373	"Mr. Freeze's Chilling Deathtrap" (B.K. & S.G.)	"
	#374	"Hunt for a Robin Killer" (G.K. & S.G.) (Started fan movement for the "old" Batman)	"
	#375	"The Frigid Finger of Fate" (B.K. & S.G.)	"
	#376	"Hunted--or Haunted" (Bob Kane's LAST 'TEC art)	"

#377 "The Riddler's Prison-puzzle Problem" (F.S. & S.G.)15

Schwartz inaugurated yet another "change" of a sort, as out went the old artists and writers and in came writer Frank Robbins (of Johnny Hazard fame) and artists Bob Brown and Joe Giella. These issues bridged together the end of the "camp" era with the upcoming "Big Change."

	#378	"Batman! Drop Dead...Twice" (Part One)	14
	#379	"Two Killings for the Price of One" (Part Two)	14
	#380	"Marital Bliss-miss"	15
	#381	"One Drown...One More to Go"	16
	#382	"Riddle of the Robbin' Robin" by Robbins	15
1/69	#383	"The Fortune-cookie Caper"	"
	#384	"Whatever Will Happen to Heiress Heloise?" (Batgirl and Robin replace E-Man as back-up)	"
	#385	"Die Small...Die Big" (written by Bob Kanigher) (Critically acclaimed)	"
	#386	"Stand-in for Murder" (BM solo)	"
	#387	"The Cry of Night is--Sudden Death" (Mike Friedrich updated "Case of the Chemical Syndicate", which also was reprinted in this issue)	17
	#388	"Public Luna-tic Number One"; with The Joker	14
	#389	"Batman's Evil Eye"; with The Scarecrow (This story inadvertently [or was it advertently?] brought on The Batman's forthcoming "Big Change")	15
	#390	"If the Coffin Fits--Wear it" (BM solo)	15
	#391	"The Gal Most Likely to be--Batman's Widow"	15
	#392	"I Died...a Thousand Deaths"	14
	#393	"The Combo Caper" (LAST BM-Robin teamup--for now)	15

And finally, Schwartz hits fandom with "The Big Change!" Fandom had been clamoring for a return to THE Batman's early '40's image, that of "a dread creature of the night." They cited The Batman's handling by Boltinoff, Haney, and Adams (ESPECIALLY ADAMS!) in THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD as the way he should be handled. Schwartz finally gave in, bringing in Denny O'Neil and Neal Adams (and Dick Giordano) to alternate with the team of Robbins and Brown. Schwartz moved Robin into Hudson University, transplanted Bruce and Alfred to a penthouse atop Wayne Foundation, and eliminated the Batmobile to be replaced by an oft-used (to this date) sleek, experimental racing car. At last, a change for the better!

	#394	"A Victim's Victim" (Robbins & Brown) (Continued story from BATMAN #217)	15
1/70	#395	"The Secret of the Waiting Graves" (O'Neil & Adams)	16
	#396	"The Brain-pickers" (F.R. & B.B.)	15
	#397	"Paint a Picture of Peril" (D.O. & N.A.)	"
	#398	"The Poison Pen Puzzle" (F.R. & B.B.)	"
	#399	"Death Comes to a Small Locked Room" (D.O. & B.B.)	"
	#400	"Challenge of the Man-bat" (F.R. & N.A.)	"
	#401	"Target for Tonight" (F.R. & B.B.)	16
	#402	"Man or Bat?" (F.R. & N.A.)	15
	#403	"You Die by Mourning" (F.R. & B.B. and Giacoia)	"
	#404	"Ghost of the Killer Skies" (D.O. & N.A.) (intended as a tribute to Kanigher and Kubert)	"

	#405	"The First of the Assassins" (D.C., B.B., & F.G.) (First in the League of Assassins series)	15
	#406	"Your Servant of Death--Dr. Darrk" (2nd in series, same credits as #405's)	"
1/71	#407	Marriage: Impossible" (F.R. & N.A.) (3rd in Man-bat series)	"
	#408	"The House That Haunted Batman" (Len Wein & Marv Wolfman collaborated on this Adams-drawn tale, one of their first pro-efforts)	"
	#409	"Man in the Eternal Mask" (F.R., B.B., and F.G.'s last inking job. Giordano becomes permanent inker for Brown and Novick, not to mention Adams already)	"
	#410	"A Vow From the Grave" (D.O. & N.A.) (Neal Adams' last 'Tec job--was switched to BATMAN)	"
	#411	"Into the Den of the Death-dealers" (D.C. & B.B.) (3rd in Assassins series)	"
	#412	Legacy of Hate" (F.R. & B.B.)	"
	#413	"Freak-out at Phantom Hollow" (F.R. & B.B.)	"
	#414	"Legend of the Key Hook Lighthouse" (1st 25¢ issue) (D.C. & Irv Novick, his first 'Tec job)	"
	#415	"Challenge of the Consumer Crusader" (F.R. & B.B.)	"
	#416	"Man-bat Madness" (F.R. story & art, 4th in series)	17
	#417	"Batman for a Night" (F.R. & B.B.)	17
	#418	"...And be a Villain" (D.O. & I.N.) (Featured the return of The Creeper)	18
1/72	#419	"Secret of the Slaying Statues" (D.O. & I.N.)	17
	#420	"Forecast for Tonight...Murder" (F.R. story and art)	17
	#421	"Blind Justice--Blind Fear" (same as above)	16
	#422	"Highway to Nowhere" (D.C. & B.B.)	17
	#423	"The Most Dangerous Twenty Miles in Gotham City" (F.R. & B.B.) Interesting Kaluta cover.	15
	#424	"Double Cross-fire" (F.R. & B.B.) Last 25¢ issue	14
	#425	"The Stage is Set for Murder" (D.O. & I.N.) (first 20¢ issue, with a Berni Wrightson cover)	15
	#426	"Killer Roulette" (F.R. story and art)	"
	#427	"A Small Case of Murder" (F.R. & I.N.)	"
	#428	"The Toughest Cop in Gotham" (F.R. & B.B.)	"
	#429	"Man-bat Over Vegas" (F.R. story and art)	16
	#430	"Clue of the False Faces" (Aparo cover, F.R., B.B., & Cardy inks)	15
1/73	#431	"This Murder Has Been Censored" (Kaluta cover, D.O., I.N., & Murphy Anderson inks)	"
	#432	"The Great Rip-off Mystery" (F.R., B.B., & M.A.)	"
	#433	"The Killer in the Smog" (F.R., Dick Dillin pencils and Giordano inks)	"
	#434	"The Spook That Stalked Batman" (F.R. & I.N.) (Last monthly issue; now bi-monthly)	"
	#435	"The Spook Strikes Again" (F.R, & I.N.)	16
	#436	"The Night Has a Thousand Fears" (F.R. & B.B.)	15

Issue #436 marked the last issue for editor Schwartz, writer (and artist) Robbins, and artist Brown. Schwartz was shifted to the now-defunct STRANGE SPORTS STORIES, and DC newcomer Archie Goodwin was brought in to take over. Again, a change came in the Batman world, as Goodwin, also the writer for the series, planned to bring The Batman back further to his original

conception of a "creature of the night." To accomplish this, he reinstated DETECTIVE COMICS' original logo and hired BRAVE AND BOLD artist Jim Aparo, acclaimed for his interpretation of The Batman, as his permanent artist. Schedule wise, things did not go so well for Aparo, so Goodwin had to use the talents of other artists, who were extremely capable of filling in. An unknown little back-up feature, the updated MANHUNTER, soon blossomed into stardom under co-creators Goodwin and artist Walt Simonson.

	#437	"Deathmask" (Goodwin and Aparo)	12
1/74	#438	"A Monster Walks Wayne Manor" (A.G. and J.A.)	12
		"Gotham Gang Line-Up" (from DETECTIVE #328)	15
		(First 100-page Super Spectacular)	
	#439	"Night of the Stalker" (Steve Englehart and Amendola)	14
		"Batman's Bewitched Nightmare" (from DETECTIVE #336)	15
	#440	"Ghost Mountain Midnight" (A.G. & S.A.)	12
		"Inside Story of the Outsider" (from DETECTIVE #356)	15
	#441	"Judgment Day" (Goodwin and Howie Chaykin) w/Robin	12
		"Case of the Prophetic Pictures" (from DETECTIVE #42)	13
		"The Carbon Copy Crimes" (from BATMAN #38)	11
	#442	"Death Flies the Haunted Sky" (Goodwin and Alex Toth)	11
		"Vanishing Village" (from BATMAN #31)	11
	#443	"Gotterdammerung" (A.G. & M.S.) Manhunter's death	20
		"The Secret of Hunter's Inn" (from BATMAN #18)	12

Just when DETECTIVE was beginning to look like one of the best books on the stands, Archie Goodwin left DC to take over his original position at Warren--although presently he is with Seaboard. Julius Schwartz took over DETECTIVE once more, and began a five-part serial by Len Wein and Jim Aparo--which will feature the Creeper as a guest-star, and will probably be Wein's last work, at least for the present, at National. He has now accepted an editorial post at Marvel.

1/75	#444	"Bat-Murderer" (L.W. & J.A.) with Talia	12
	#445	"Break-In at the Big House" (L.W. & J.A.) w/Ras Al Ghul	12

In summing up, the long run of DETECTIVE COMICS, approaching its 36th year with The Batman, has provided its readers with many exciting stories (yes, and many bad ones too) and one of the greatest comics characters in the field--THE BATMAN. Let's all hope that we have 36 more years to look forward to.

THE BATMANIANS SPEAK

Dear Rich,

"Ronald Rabbit" is an underground funny-animal created by John Pound that's appeared in a small number of books (GORY STORIES QUARTERLY is the only one I can think of off the top, though) and is an incredibly funny strip which I'm proud to have lined up for Star*Reach #2. (Mike is here responding to my queries about the second issue of his "underground/overground comic," which should be available from him by the end of the year. It will have 48 black and white pages, a full color Neal

Adams cover, and will sell for $1 including postage.--RHM) Ronald will be appearing soon in his own comic, RONALD THE BAREARIAN, put out by Bud Plant and Comics & Comix. I, too, feel funny-animals are on their way to a new high. The immense instant popularity of Howard the Duck lends itself to this belief.

Howie Chaykin will continue with Cody Starbuck, but probably not until a future date. He's wrapped up in his new project for Seaboard (The Scorpion), but I'm hoping. Most likely at this point is Howie commencing work on a full length book...which would be quite a trip.

Stephanie Starr had its origin back in 1970 as a Modesty Blaise-in-the future series and has evolved from there. It was originally going to be the back-up in AQUAMAN after the Deadman 3 parter, but then Dick Giordano and Carmine had their falling-out, the book was cancelled and Dick quit. We've held on to the idea, though, for quite awhile and I'm really looking forward to it. I should do the scripting in about a month, I believe.

To state the obvious, there has been one hell of a flood under the bridge since the days of 1966-67 when the pre professional correspondence took place between Julie Schwartz and myself. It's an open secret that the reason I left National Periodicals in December, 1971 was largely to do with that nebulous thing called "working conditions" (though money and editorial-advancement elsewhere had a bit to do with it) which translated in my case into an unhappiness with what I was doing and no apparent way out of the situation. Chief among my gripes of the time was not being allowed to write Batman scripts; I felt the best work I had done had been on that strip and certainly The Batman was the character in whom I had the highest interest.

Since my departure from National I've felt deep regret in the crude way (to inform you) that I did it, but justification that the decision itself was right, primarily in the comics-writing education I've received since then. But looking back at the "Friedrich Origin Story" I'm deeply impressed with the writing education I received from Julie Schwartz. So much of what he had to say has shaped my attitudes since then toward comics: to try, in some measure, to be original; to develop "dramatic characterization;" to have "dramatic captions, swinging dialogue, good scene transition and action that hasn't been done over and over." So MANY of his words are the EXACT words I use if someone asks me now "How do I write for comics."!

Of course, I should note that there is frequently a great gap between theory and practice. Once one starts writing for a living, frequently the "living" (the money involved) takes precedence over the creative "writing"...with the Dread Deadline Doom hanging over one's head as well. One can, as Denny O'Neil insists, develop such a writing "craft" that one can "slide" when necessary, even for quite awhile; though my own experience (some painfully personal) is that a writer can't slide too long without consciously going back to basics, or his writing will ultimately suffer.

In any case, there were times (I hope not too frequently, Julie) when Mr. Schwartz would accept my work even when it didn't meet his standards; there were also times when I'd try a different approach (in a couple of JUSTICE LEAGUE stories, and the "Vengeance for a Cop" Robin trilogy, for example) and he applauded my efforts.

Back to the up-date: I suppose it's obvious that I called the shot a number of years ahead of the game in the very first Batman plot I'd submitted, with its rejected emphasis on the now-again acceptable detective aspect of Batman. (Parenthetically, I'm sure if Julie'd gone along

with the plot, my script would've been atrocious, considering what I turned in just a month later.) There was an upheaval in the editorial attitude toward Batman, brought about largely by Neal Adams' unilateral initiation of a new artstyle emphasizing the mysterious nature of The Batman, an upheaval in which my ego insists that I had at least a small part.

If anyone can't figure it out, the "bloody" reference was to a semi-serious auto accident that Guy Lillian and myself were involved in on our way to San Francisco to meet Julie for the first time. The memory of how close we came to never being in comics still scares me, though as it turned out the greatest injury was to our nerves. I didn't meet Julie until a year after that and it was four or five before Guy did (and now he's got my old job as Julie's assistant!).

The Bob Kane reference is rather amusing. It's since become my "business to know" and knowing, I said, "So what?" Kane had a contract that forbade anybody's name but his own; he also supplied artwork regularly, but used assistants (Win Mortimer, Dick Sprang, Shelly Moldoff; dozens of others) to actually do the artwork. Perhaps Kane was involved in some aspects of the pencilling, such as the breakdowns (there is a continuity of sorts over the years), but nobody asked...nor would have gotten an answer anyway...since there was nothing to do about it.

The drugs-in comics question has changed with the Comics Code change of 1970. And it's worthy to note that Julie's GREEN LANTERN/GREEN ARROW was National's first effort in that direction. It was a crushing blow to a young teenager to find that the grown-up world was not in touch with what was happening in HIS own world. But what I'd written in that rejected version of my first-sold story was so totally naive in relation to what I've learned since. One hassle in coming from a middle class straight background.

Lastly, I hope Tom Fagan can show he has a better memory than I and let me know when and why he'd called me and talked about the Hell's Angels. I'd totally forgotten that call until I read my mention in the article and now I recall a tiny bit, but not the reason for calling. I was only a fan and not one of any great renown or involvement, so I can't make out any reason to have been called.

Looking back, I don't think I could have done a better article today than I did seven years ago on how I got to write The Batman. I hope the updating has been a little informative. It may interest you that I've swallowed a great deal of the past and sent off a BATMAN synopsis to Julie about two weeks ago, for a story I'm convinced is potentially one of my better ones. Either Julie's overwhelmingly swamped or he hasn't been able to forget, since I haven't heard from him yet. But I'm different today and he's different today (if one can judge by the stories he's editing now)...perhaps something can be worked out someday.

My OTHER thought is Star*Reach Productions getting so big that I'll BUY the damn character and write ALL of the stories. That's a couple of decades off, though, I guess...

Still Bat-fanatically,
Mike Friedrich, Box 385, Hayward, CA 94541

(Technically, GL/GA #s 85-86 weren't, believe it or not, National's first stories dealing with drug abuse! In Action #378, July 1969--before the GL/GA story and even before Marvel's Spider-Man story that led to the change in the Code--I find a Legion of Super-Heroes story in which Timber Wolf is victimized by a 30th-century drug pusher, and only Light Lass' influence enables him to break the chemical's hold. And

f course there were a number of drug stories before the Code--in Adventure #44, for example, Bob Kane's "Rusty and his Pals" tackled a gang of opium smugglers. But surely no one can deny Julie's many achievements and innovations, in GL/GA and elsewhere.

As for the Hell's Angels...--RHM)

Rich,

Am enjoying Batmania 18 and 19. Like a trip into the past reading the issues.

Castro Mike doesn't recall but he advertised some Batman/Detective books for sale in Batmania. That was why I called to ask him what he had. I bought him out in fact. Seeing as he was in California, home of the Hell's Angels, I asked him about the group as they were in the news at the time after a particularly vicious gang fight.

So now you know the "story behind the story." "Castro" seemed amazed I called him at the hour I did. It was only 1 A.M. in Rutland but the idea of anyone being up "that late" freaked him out. I got a kick out of that...being a "night creature" myself!

Hurriedly,
Tom Fagan, Rutland, Vt.

Dear Rich,

I heard a rumor that now that Roy Thomas has quit as editor for MARVEL he may be writing for Julius Schwartz including GREEN LANTERN, the JLA, and BATMAN. Can you dig it? Now if Adams would come back and be inked by Giordano and/or Adkins....

On to BATMANIA...a rather good cover by Biljo White. Editorial title. How about COWL COMMENTS?

BLOOD, SWEAT AND TEARS by Mike Friedrich--I always like to read about the people who produce the comics and this article (along with the interview with Jim Shooter in THE LEGION OUTPOST #8) gives me (and probably other would-be comics writers) further impetus to keep on trying to penetrate the field.

DETECTIVE COMICS INDEX--some people may find it interesting but I didn't.

THE BATMAN OF OLD AND NEW by Robert Mallory was more interesting as a survey sort of thing. I like Mercy's concept of the Earth II Batgirl, and say YEA!

THE BATMANIANS SPEAK--I thought for sure you said I had a letter in this col...well (sob), I don't care that (boohoo) you didn't print my (bawl!) letter. Marvin Hamlisch was just a flash in the pan. Today he's Raquel Welch...

GOTHAM WIRETAPS--interesting as always. Why doesn't DC go to 25¢ rather than cutting page count. The price hike to 25¢ hasn't hurt MARVEL or GOLD KEY any, tho I wish MARVEL charged less for their reprints.

COMIC ODDITIES AND BAT-FACTS--again my items weren't used! Okay for you, man--your next shipment of H will have dandruff in it! Lastly, interior art was all quite good, especially Mercy's.

Black Wolf, Box 887, Saranac Lake, N.Y.

(From what I hear, Roy Thomas is planning to stick with Marvel for now. For those of you who are interested, Marvin Hamlisch was the guy who played Scott Joplin's melody in "The Sting"--and, I believe, won an Oscar for it. Thanks, Mike Valerio.

As you know now, DC has gone up to 25¢, but unfortunately is still planning to drop its page-count (see "Gotham Wiretaps" this issue). Wolf, an Indian fan who sometimes passes among us foreigners as George Vincent, had his letter cut out of last issue's column at the last minute, for

which I apologize. I trust I won't find any dandruff in my "H"- but then, I too come from a middle-class straight background--RHM)

Dear Rich,

Just as BATMAN improved with age, so does BATMANIA! No. 19 was a remarkable improvement over 18, and in most aspects was better than the original 1960's BATMANIAs. The offset of course is beyond a doubt easier to look at than mimeo; you're very welcome for the printing info, and thanks a lot for the plug!

Now that BATMANIA is totally offset I hope to see a lot more artwork. While articles are paramount in BATMANIA, good artwork adds to the overall excellence of any fanzine. It would of course be great if you could get some pro art (ADAMS!!!!!) but with artists like Van Vlack and Schumer you can quite effectively carry the 'zine. I was hoping to see more Jasinski as in 18, but hopefully more artists will emerge.

The articles, ah, the articles! Talented Friedrich's article, while dated in itself, was still relevant to today's aspiring writers. The index is an index is an index; what more can I say except that I wish I had all the issues indexed! Undoubtedly though, "The Batman of Old and New" was the finest article yet in BATMANIA. It was a well-researched and well-thought-out essay on the development of Batman. I'm beginning to sound like my English prof, but from a fan's point of view it yielded much info I never more than superficially knew about THE Batman. I agree with all Robert had to say, and I'm sorry Adams left, for as he says: "...with the likes of O'Neil and Adams near-perfection was reached."

It was fascinating to see Arlen recreate Lettraset letters! They look almost like the real thing, and of course save a lot of money! They make the articles look very professional, although they were a bit large. "Comic Oddities" and "Gotham Wiretaps" are fine running features.

The main complaint I'd have is the fact that you didn't ask for contributions. BATMANIA lives with the fans, and a wide variety of Batmanian artists and writers would truly help "join together those who enjoy...Batman and Robin." I look forward to #20!

Holy LOC!

Mike Fasman, Box 99, 505 Comstock Ave., Syracuse, NY 13210

(Ask for contributions: Consider it done--RHM)

Rich--

With great enjoyment I read the 19th big issue of BATMANIA. This new issue was such an improvement over #18, something you must be proud of. Every page was read thoroughly, a treat for a former editor who hopes that all future issues will be this outstanding.

I re-read Mike's (Friedrich) revealing article, and really "cried" for the guy. Only a devoted, ambitious guy could endure the agony he must have felt. Many times I've wanted to submit story ideas to DC editors, but I'm sure there are countless ones who never have their stuff read. But, in reading Mike's account, the fact is proved: if a person wants to write, he will make it if he will persevere. I look forward to reading a future account of his later successes--and trust his "next time out" was easier. Let's all prevail on Mike to continue this interesting saga--'cause he's one of us!

A side note on the above article--I congratulate Arlen Schumer on his layout of the article.

Ray Miller's been around as long, or longer than I have, and the credits really pile up when you look at his over-all contributions. The

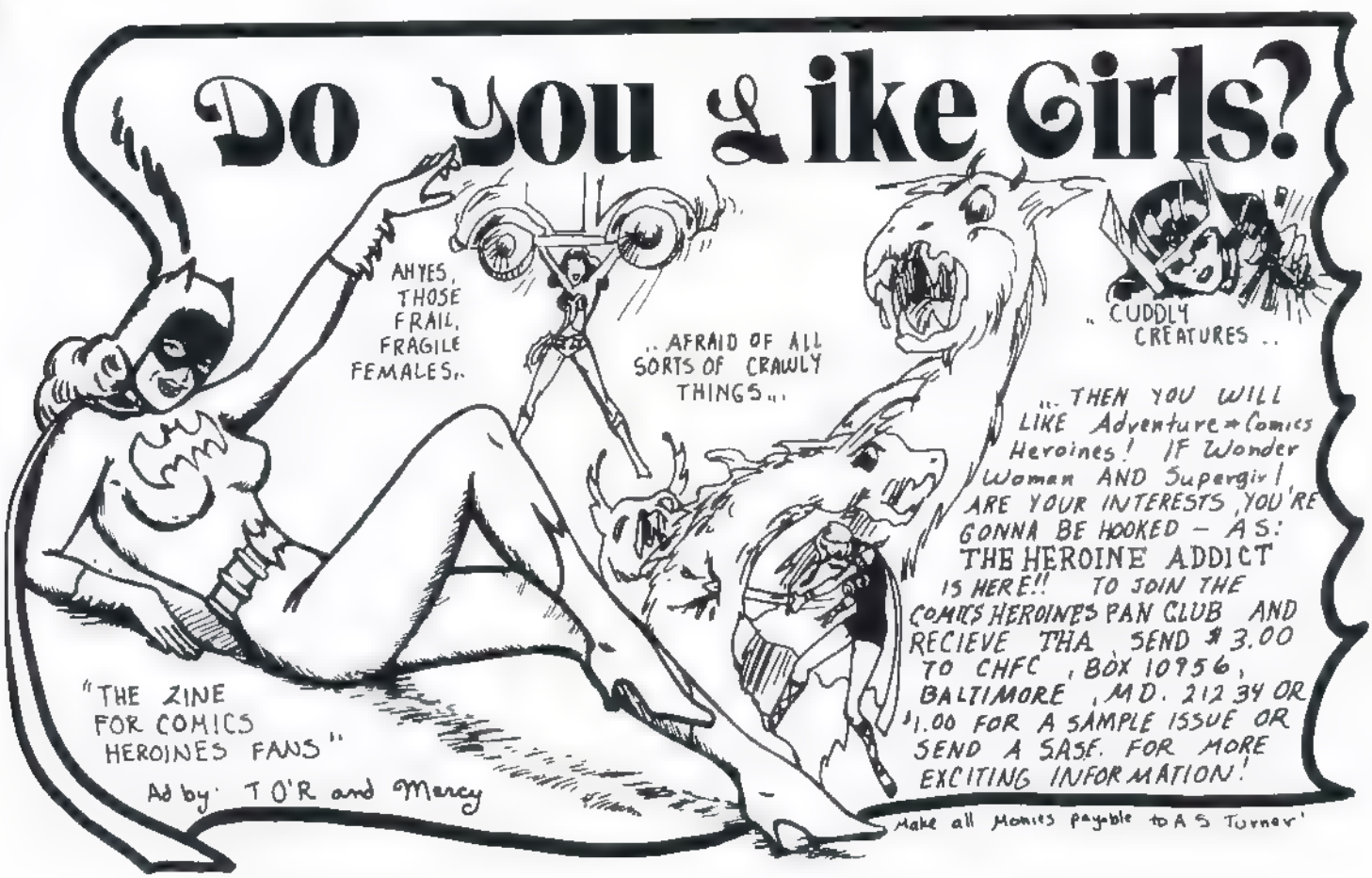
Detective Comics Index is an absolute must for the pages of BATMANIA. Collectors and completists will find this a valuable checklist. Others using it will be those who are unsure of reprints--where they were originally taken from and those who have coverless comics and wish to know the actual number/date of them.

Bill Neville's illo for Robert Mallory's "BM-Old-New" article was excellent. Try to use his skills as much as possible. This article was necessarily a re cap of old news to a long-time fan. But for exact, professional Reporting, Bob Mallory's piece takes into account just what our BATMAN character is all about. The newer fan, after reading it, has a concise history of our favorite comic book hero. I enjoyed looking back thru the years and was glad someone as talented as Bob was telling it to me.

Sincerely,
Biljo White, P.O. Box 440, Columbia, Missouri 65201

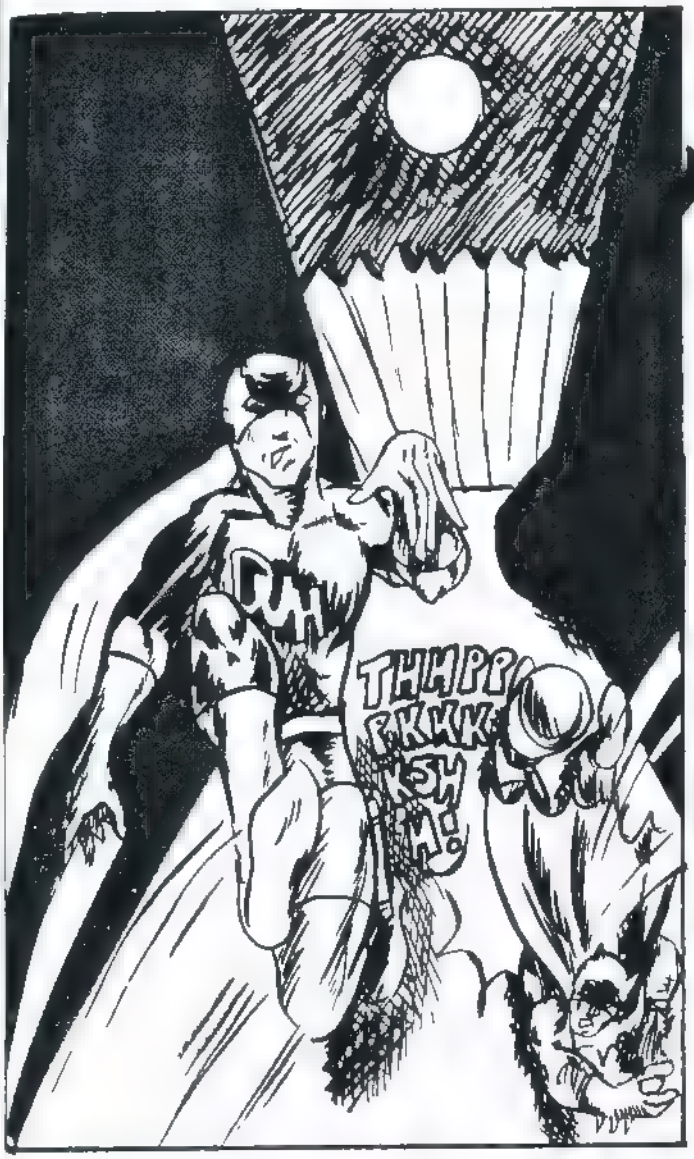
(Bill Neville's illustration, incidentally, was submitted before "The Batman of Old and New" -it was Bill's own idea, which Bob Mallory has insisted he get credit for. I'd like to run more art by Bill and by Jerry Jasinski, but it's up to them...

And so it went--just about everybody, from the newcomers to fandom to the Batmanians of old, seemed to like BATMANIA #19. I only hope they like this issue as well--RHM)


Do You Like Girls?
AHYES, THOSE FRAIL, FRAGILE FEMALES..
..AFRAID OF ALL SORTS OF CRAWLY THINGS..
..CUDDLY CREATURES..
..THEN YOU WILL LIKE Adventure+Comics Heroines! IF Wonder Woman AND Supergirl ARE YOUR INTERESTS, YOU'RE GONNA BE HOOKED - AS: THE HEROINE ADDICT IS HERE!! TO JOIN THE COMICS HEROINES FAN CLUB AND RECIEVE THA, SEND $3.00 TO CHFC, BOX 10956, BALTIMORE, MD. 21234 OR $1.00 FOR A SAMPLE ISSUE OR SEND A SASE. FOR MORE EXCITING INFORMATION!
"THE ZINE FOR COMICS HEROINES FANS"
Ad by: T O'R and Marcy
Make all Monies payable to A S Turner

THE PENTHOUSE APARTMENT OF BRUCE (BATS-MAN) WAYNE...
PLAYBOY
SUDDENLY, THE NIGHT IS INTERRUPTED BY...
IT'S THE BATS-SIGNAL! QUICK, GET ME MY CRIMEFIGHTING SUIT, ALFURD!
YESSIR! I MEAN... WELL YOU SEE...
DIDN'T YOU TAKE IT TO THE CLEANERS YET?
UHHH...
WELL, IT WAS MY FAULT ENTIRELY AND I'LL PAY FOR IT, I ASSURE YOU!
WHAT HAPPENED?
WELL SIR, I FORGOT TO TELL THEM TO DRYCLEAN IT!
AND THUS, THE STAGE IS SET FOR THE MOST INCREDIBLE, UNBELIEVEABLE, FANTASTIC, SEEMINGLY IMPOSSIBLE AND UTTERLY RIDICULOUS TEAM-UP EVER...
BATS-MAN Meets DAZEDEVIL!
STORY: JAY L. ZILBER
ART: MERCY VAN VLACK
TYPOS: MIKE FLYNN

SHORTLY, IN THE OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER BORDEN...
WUMP!
GOOD EVENING, BATS-MAN! GLAD YOU COULD MAKE IT. I... WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR UNIFORM?
IT'S A LONG STORY COMMISSIONER. WHAT'S UP?
THERE'S BEEN A MURDER IN THIS VERY BUILDING, AND WE HAVE NO LEADS YET!
IN THE ADJOINING HALLWAY...
MEN
NO CLUES. NOTHING.
WAIT! CONSIDER THIS. HE WAS STABBED IN THE BACK. THAT MEANS THE MURDERER IS A COWARD, RIGHT?
RIGHT...
MEN
AND THE BODY WAS NOT LEFT UNDER THIS LADDER, SO THE SUSPECT MUST BE SUPERSTITIOUS
YES...
WHICH MEANS...
CRIMINALS ARE A COWARDLY, SUPERSTITIOUS LOT?
EXACTLY!
ALL THE CLUES POINT TO ONE THING: THE MURDERER WAS NONE OTHER THAN THE MAD KILLER, WHO JUST ESCAPED FROM PRISON.
HOW CAN YOU TELL?
CALL IT INSTINCT. AN INNER FEELING. ... AND THIS NOTE I FOUND UNDER THE BODY.
I strike again! The Mad Killer
NOW TO FIND THE MAD KILLER, STRIKE FEAR INTO HIS HEART, AND BRING HIM IN!
SLURPPP
HE WAS DOING 900 IN A 25 MPH ZONE


DUH
THHPP
PKHK
KSH
H!

THIS TWO-BIT COPY OF MYSELF MUST BE THE MAD KILLER IN DISGUISE!
MY RADAR SENSE MUST BE ON THE BLINK! THE MAD KILLER IS DRESSED LIKE A GIANT BAT!

...NOW TO STRIKE FEAR INTO HIS HEART...
EEEEAAAR RGGHHH HHHHN!
?

BUT DAZEDEVIL IS THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!
HUH? N-N-NOTHING HAPPENED?
OKAY, YA JERK! I'M TAKING YOU IN FOR MURDER. OR AT LEAST INDECENT EXPOSURE, OR DISTURBING THE PEACE!

EEEYOWWWW!
DISTURBING THE... YEAH, MAYBE THIS PAINT CAN IS MAKING TOO MUCH NOISE.
DUH
PA
14

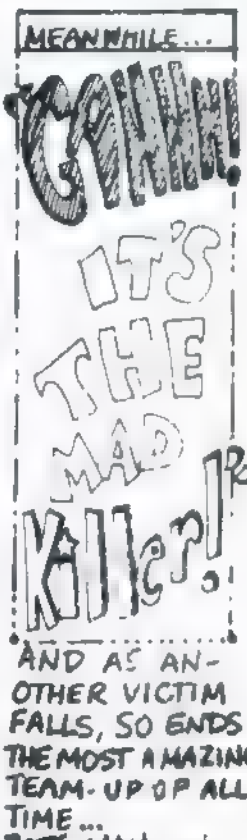
MEANWHILE...
GAHHH
IT'S THE MAD Killer!
20

NOW LOOK FELLA. I GOTTA GO AFTER THE MAD KILLER, SO YOU'D BETTER COME ALONG PEACEFULLY... RIGHT NOW!
YUK-YUK! GUFFAW! VERY FUNNY! WE BOTH KNOW THAT YOU'RE THE MAD KILLER. NOW COME...
... ALONG? UH-OH. GOTTA RUN! BYE!
NUTS! NOW I'LL HAFTA CHASE HIM. IT'S TIMES LIKE THESE I WISH RUBIN WAS STILL WORKING WITH ME.
MEANWHILE, AT HOTSHOT UNIVERSITY...
OH RUBIN! I'M ETERNALLY GREATFUL! THAT... THAT AWFUL PERSON ATTACKED ME... AND TRIED TO...
I KNOW. I SAW THE WHOLE THING... AND NOW FOR MY REWARD!
REWARD?
SMACK!
OH MY!
THEY DON'T CALL HIM THE TEEN WONDER FOR NOTHING!
GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE, PRONTO!
...BUT OF COURSE, RUBIN'S OFF AT COLLEGE, STUDYING HARD LIKE A GOOD LITTLE BOY
COME BACK HERE, YOU GONIFF!*
*THAT'S YIDDISH, KIDS-- JEWISH JAY. **
** WOW! CULTURE IN COMICS-- MISHUGUNA MORRISSEY
WOOP!
HUH?
WHA?

SUDDENLY...
BOYS! HONESTLY!
REALLY! I NEVER!
BATS-MAN! FIGHTING IN THE STREETS AGAIN? FOR PETE'S SAKE HAVE YOU NOTHING BETTER TO DO?
..BUT... I...
JUST LIKE LITTLE KIDS! MARCH RIGHT HOME, THIS INSTANT!
BUT... BLECHH WIDOW! I CAN EXPLAIN...

LATER...
ALFURD, I'M HOME... WHAT ARE YOU READING?
PLAYBOY

HURRY UP. I STILL WANT TO SEE THE LATE MOVIE, "RETURN OF THE FLY" AT THE DRIVE-IN
GRRR...


MEANWHILE...
GRRR!
IT'S THE MAD KILLER!
AND AS ANOTHER VICTIM FALLS, SO ENDS THE MOST AMAZING TEAM-UP OF ALL TIME...
BATS-MAN and DAZED EVIL!

Bat-Mite

"AN ELF IN A CRAZY-LOOKING BATMAN COSTUME"

...which is exactly how Robin described him at first seeing him, in Detective #269. That illustrious issue marked the premiere appearance of Batman's biggest fan, the tiny Bat-Mite. He originally came from another dimension to help form the trio of Batman, Robin and Bat-Mite--just for fun, as he said. Naturally Batman, not being in a funny-type mood, tried to discourage the impish admirer, telling him he'd only be in the way when they were fighting criminals. And such fighting is certainly extremely dangerous and takes a lot of training to become used to. But Batman hadn't even waited to see what the little man could do, which seems slightly unfair.

Anyway, seemingly disappointed, Bat-Mite vanished. Batman and Robin thought that they had successfully talked him out of it and were rid of him for good, but as this was only page three of the story such a possibility was unlikely. Sure enough, when the Dynamic Duo went out on patrol, Bat-Mite was along too--invisibly perched atop the Batmobile.

He happily romped through the rest of the story, causing a bridge to act like a roller coaster, a giant phonograph record to fly through the air, and a great sphinx and a colossal Batman statue to help Batman and Robin catch some crooks. But since this was Batman's story, all of Bat-Mite's attempts to help ended in failure until Batman intervened, telling the imp exactly how to use his powers. Then the criminals were stopped almost instantly, certainly more easily than if Batman and Robin had had to run after them.

But in spite of all this, Bat-Mite received no thanks at all. He aptly named Batman a spoilsport early in the story; this became more and more obvious as the story progressed. The Caped Crusader failed to see the humor in Bat-Mite's actions and kept trying to get rid of the sprite, even threatening him with a spanking at one point. Bat-Mite finally vanished at the end of the tale, promising to return.

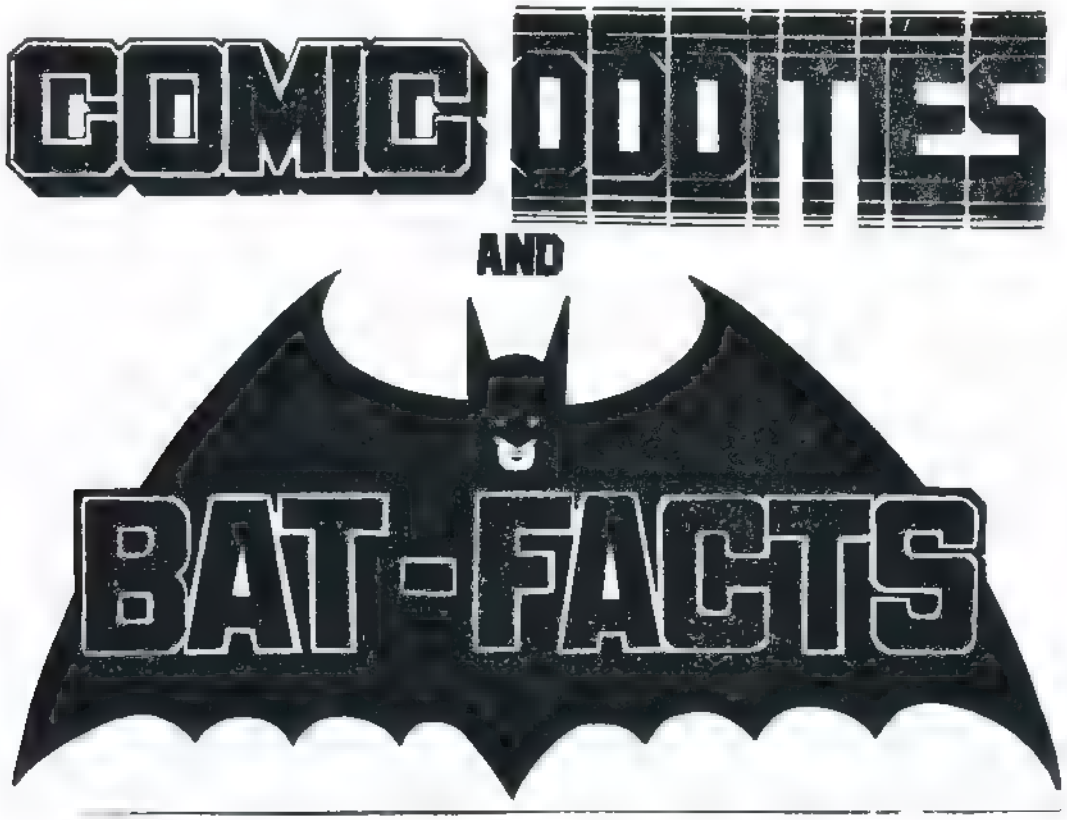
He did return, thirteen times after that. His son, Bat-Mite Jr., even made an appearance in World's Finest #157, so apparently he passed his admiration for Batman on to his offspring. Each tale he appeared in was almost always enjoyable. He tried to help almost every time, sometimes even helping Batwoman, Bat-Girl, and Bat-Hound. Only Batman and Robin seemed to be unreceptive to his help, usually threatening him with spankings at the beginning of stories and ending up pleading with him to go home. They even treated Bat-Hound better than Bat-Mite. "Spoilsports" was certainly an apt description.

Some interdimensional disturbance must have occurred in 1964 that made it extremely difficult for Bat-Mite to return to our dimension. As it was, he was certainly never seen again in Batman or Detective after June, 1964; and only made two more appearances in World's Finest,

his last being in #169 (September, 1967). Some people attribute this to something called a "New Look," but whatever it was, it sure did something to the Batman Family. Maybe Bat-Mite took the missing members back to his dimension. Anyway, Batman was never the same again.

Will Bat-Mite ever return to cheer on his hero? Present indications, of course, suggest not. The mysterious avenger of the night can't very well have a two-foot-tall imp following him around, always ready to pull some magic trick. Of course, Mr. Mxyzptlk made a couple of cameo appearances in Superman recently, and he's always been Bat-Mite's counterpart in the Superman Family--and also gone for a long time. But unless current attitudes drastically change, the future for Bat-Mite looks bleak; or, to put it another way, virtually nonexistent.

--by Dwayne Best



SPEAKING OF INACCURATE ADS--The ad for the Famous First Edition reissue of Batman #1 gives the magazine's title, in the upper left-hand corner, as "Superman." Also, the inside front cover of the actual book gives the number as F-6 (though it's F-5 on the cover), and the date is two months ahead of the other DC books released at the same time--but we know why, don't we?

--Jay Zilber

MORE TROUBLE IN TROLL LAND--Despite the rumors that have been going around, the story "Trouble in Troll Land," reprinted in the first Shazam! Limited Collector's Edition, did indeed originally appear in Captain Marvel, Jr. #11, to which it was credited. John Pierce, who started the rumor, thought he had a copy of that issue that did not contain this story, but what he actually possesses, it turns out, is a copy of Captain Marvel, Jr. #13 with #11's cover stapled onto it.

My thanks to John, for letting me borrow this issue; to Ray Miller,

for identifying it correctly; and to Jerry Bails, for confirming that the story appeared in #11.

Jerry adds that the story was written by the late Otto Binder (who autographed his copy), and that the "Drawn By Mac Raboy" was on the original--even though the story was actually drawn by Maurice del Bourgo! Of course, it was common practice in the Golden Age to credit the originator of a feature (like Bob Kane on Batman) rather than the actual artist of that particular story, but Jerry notes that incorrect credits--indeed, any credits--were very rare at Fawcett.

WHAT FAMOUS FOE of The Batman has a face that glows in the dark. As shown in Detective #388, it is none other than The Joker! As revealed in the Editor's Note on page 12, "Due to a chemical accident early in his career, The Joker's face still retains a phosphorescent cast!"

--Robert Mallory

SUPERMAN ANNUAL #7 features a reprint of the cover of Superman #1. It shows the DC symbol adopted in the early '50's and says "No. 1," but the actual cover does not show these. Also, the reproduction omits the number "64" from the phrase, "64 pages of action."

--Stephen Weisenbach

ACCORDING TO Green Lantern #59, only a totally fearless person could become a Green Lantern--and there were only two such on Earth: Hal Jordan and Guy Gardner. And yet no less than three other residents of Earth have been chosen or considered for the post: Charles Vicker (GL #56), John Stewart (GL #87), and Superman (Superman #257). Apparently this qualification can be overridden when other circumstances permit!

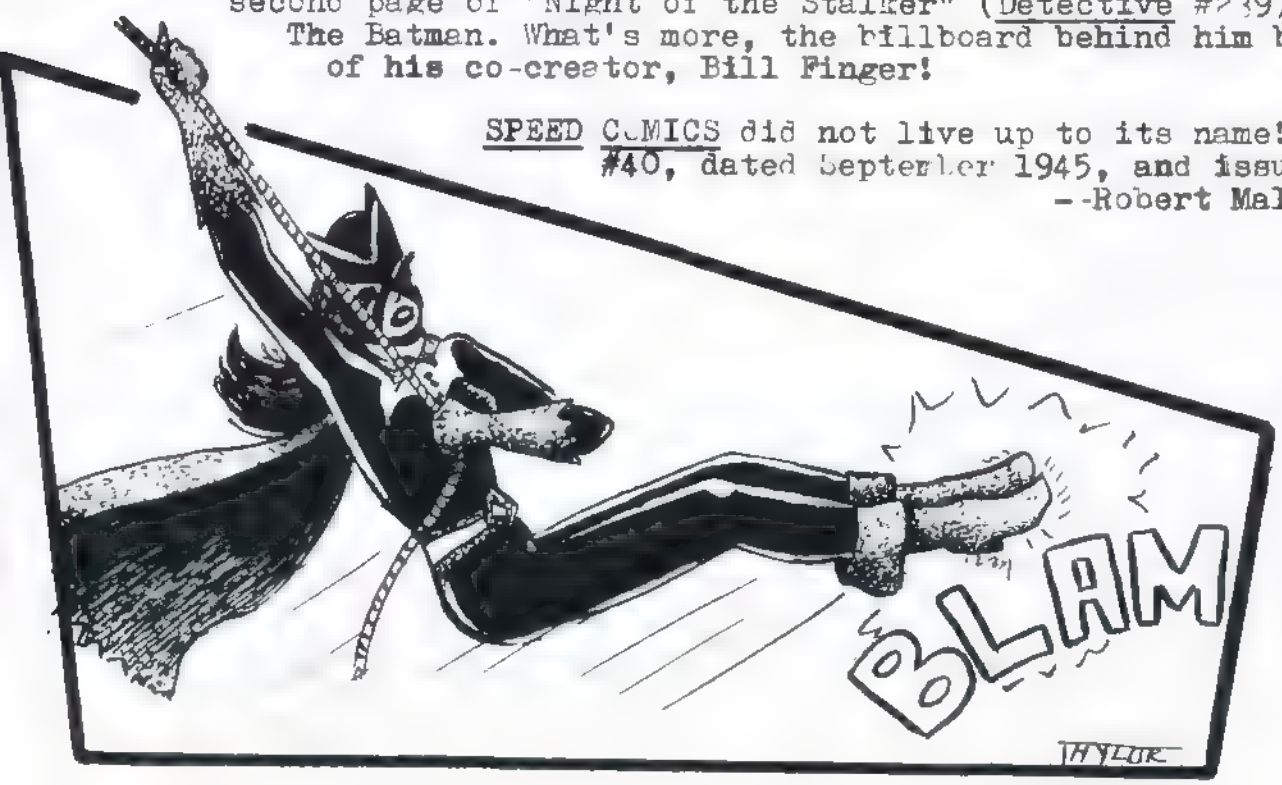
THE LONE RANGER'S HORSE once had his own comic book! That's right, after two appearances in Color, #s 369 and 392, Silver got his own magazine, numbering from #3 to #36 and covering a period of eight years!

--Robert Mallory

IT'S NOT EASY TO SEE--but if you look carefully at the first panel on the second page of "Night of the Stalker" (Detective #239) you can find The Batman. What's more, the billboard behind him bears the name of his co-creator, Bill Finger!

SPEED COMICS did not live up to its name! I have issue #40, dated September 1945, and issue #44, Feb. '47!

--Robert Mallory



BATMANIA BALLOT '74

Although the response was not as great as I had hoped, enough fans participated in the 1973 and 1974 Batmania Ballots to give a clear picture of the general preferences of Batman fans. Counting 5 points for a first-place vote, 4 points for a second-place vote, and so on, the leaders in the Best Batman Solo for 1973 were:

1. "The Joker's Five-Way Revenge" (Batman #251)--70 points
2. "Deathmask" (Detective #437)--38
3. "Merry Christmas/And a Deadly New Year" (Batman #247)--34
4. "The Batman Nobody Knows" (Batman #250)--28
5. "The Spook Strikes Again" (Detective #435)--25

In the Best Batman Teamup category:

1. "Night of the Bat" (Swamp Thing #7)--77
2. "Who Knows What Evil--" (Batman #253)--56
3. "Double Your Money--And Die" (Brave & Bold #106)--36
4. "The Night Batman Sold His Soul" (B&B #108)--26
5. "The Three Million Dollar Sky" (B&B #107)--20

Best Robin Solo:

1. "Return of the Flying Grayson" (Batman #250)--75
2. "The Immortals of Usen Castle" (Batman #248)--55
3. "Case of the Kidnapped Crusader" (Batman #249)--50
4. "The King from Canarsie" (Batman #252)--34

Best Cover:

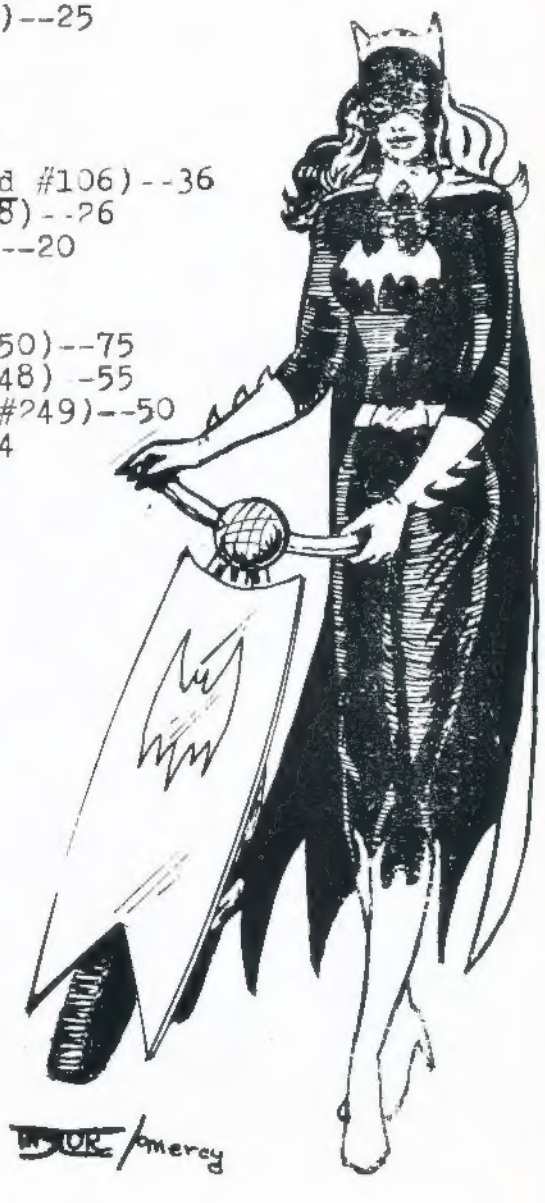
1. Batman #251 (Adams)--52
2. Swamp Thing #7 (Wrightson)--38
3. Batman #253 (Kaluta)--25
4. Detective #437 (Aparo)--22
5. Brave & Bold #107 (Aparo)--21

Best Writer:

1. Archie Goodwin--41
2. Denny O'Neil and Len Wein--37 each
4. Frank Robbins--28
5. Elliot S! Maggin--17

Best Artist:

1. Neal Adams--54
2. Dick Giordano--41
3. Jim Aparo--33
4. Berni Wrightson--29
5. Irv Novick--15



Best Editor:

1. Archie Goodwin--52
2. Julius Schwartz--47
3. Murray Boltinoff--28
4. Joe Orlando--16

Do you like the "new direction" in which Batman has been led? Yes--15, No-
Do you like the new 100-page format of Batman's magazines? Yes--13, No--4.
Would you like to see more new material in the Superspecs? Yes--17, No- 1.
(One person voted "Double Yes.")

As there was only one solo Robin story, but there were a great many Batman Robin teamups, in 1974, I lumped them all into one category, "Best Batman and/or Robin Story." The leaders:

1. "Night of the Stalker" (Detective #439)--50
2. "Moon of the Wolf" (Batman #255)--30
3. "A Monster Walks Wayne Manor" (Detective #438)--20
4. "Ghost Mountain Midnight" (Detective #440)--13
5. "Judgment Day" (Detective #441)--10

Best Batman Teamup of 1974:

1. "Gotterdammerung" (Detective #443)--45
2. "Night of the Shadow" (Batman #259)--32
3. "Death Has the Last Laugh" (B&B #111)--22
4. "Last Jet to Gotham" (B&B #114)--11
5. "The Corpse That Wouldn't Die" (B&B #115)--10

Because of the Superspec format, the category of Best Batman Reprint was a virtual necessity. I realized too late I'd forgotten the stories in the Limited Collector's Edition, Secret Origins, and the reissue of Detective #27--but it would have crowded the ballot, anyway...

1. "Die Small--Die Big" (Batman #257, from Detective #385)--16
2. "The Witch and the Manuscript of Doom" (Batman #254, from World's Best #1)--15
3. "Hunt for a Robin-Killer" (Batman #257, from Detective #374) and "The Case of the Prophetic Pictures ('Tec #441, from 'Tec #42)--13 each
5. "The Bullet-Hde Club" (Batman #254, from World's Finest #50)--9

Best Cover:

1. Detective #439 (Aparo)--36
2. Detective #443 (Aparo)--28
3. Batman #255 (Adams and Cardy)--25
4. Detective #442 (Aparo)--17
5. Detective #441 (Aparo)--10

Best Writer:

1. Archie Goodwin--40
2. Steve Englehart--27
3. Denny O'Neil--24
4. Len Wein--23
5. Bob Haney--15

Best Artist:

1. Neal Adams--38
2. Jim Aparo--37
3. Sal Amendola--21
4. Walt Simonson--19
5. Irv Novick--13

Best Editor:

1. Archie Goodwin--54
2. Julius Schwartz--31
3. Murray Boltinoff--26

Would you like to see Robin appear with Batman more often, less often, or as much as presently. More often--1, Less often--7, Same as now--2

Would you like to see more, fewer, or the present amount of super-villain stories--and are there any such villains you would especially like, or not like, to see. More--0, Fewer--6, Same as now--4. The favorites were a murderous Joker, Two-Face, and Bounty Hunter--there was also sentiment for the return of the Scarecrow, Ras al Ghul, the Spook, Poison Ivy, the Mad Hatter, Killer Moth, the Riddler, False Face, Catwoman, the Getaway Genius, Dr. Tzin Tzin, the Penguin, and Mr. Freeze -though, as with the Joker, it was specified that they should be "correctly handled." The only villains fans did not want to see were the Penguin, the Riddler, Col. Sulphur and the Man with Ten Eyes--and each was mentioned only by one fan.

--RHM

Despite DC's going up to 25¢, they're still planning to go down to 18 pages of new art in the 32 page books--the latest Shadow was a grim portent of things to come. But their Giants will follow the Marvel format of 64 pages for 50¢, with more new pages (25) to an issue; the new Joker book will have one such in addition to its regular bimonthly schedule (as will Swamp Thing) for a total of seven issues per year. Neither Batman nor (I believe) any other DC hero will appear in the Joker book, but there will be something representing him, like a dartboard in the Joker's hideout, in each issue. #? will feature two guards out to capture him, after being fired for letting him escape so many times. That issue also introduces The Weeper, about whom I know nothing besides his name.

Both Batman and 'Tec are going monthly; The Batman's adventures in both books will be drawn by Ernie Chua, with Novick moving over to The Joker. Wein will be finishing his serial after all, but it's been cut to five parts for obvious resons; the last chapter being the full-length "Bedlam Under the Big Top." A number of other writers, including Plop!'s pseudonymous Coram Nobis, will be working on Batman scripts -both his book and 'Tec will be 32 pages with some Giants (except for The Superman Family, none of DC's books will be a Giant every issue). Robin will still be appearing in every other issue of 'Tec, but Rich Bucker's Hawkman will appear in every fourth issue, as will the Elongated Man! And the new Deadman backups in the Phantom Stranger book may be drawn by (ready for this?) Steve Ditko and Wally Wood!

One final note: Red Circle is reaching out into the superhero field, and may be reviving the Hangman, with scripts by our own Tom Fagan! Let's hope it comes true--RHM

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